

February 26, 2018 \* 12:00pm \* Legislative Office Building, Room 1E

**Testimony in support of to H.B. No. 5171, An Act prohibiting the executive branch from making rescissions or other reductions to the education cost sharing grant during the fiscal year.**

Dear Senator Slossberg, Senator Boucher, Representative Fleishmann, and Representative Lavielle, and other distinguished members of the Education Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify **in support of H.B. No. 5171**, An act prohibiting the Executive Branch from making rescissions or other reductions to the Education Cost Sharing grant during the fiscal year. The argument is simple and straightforward, a threat of recessions or other reductions to the Education Cost Sharing grant during the fiscal year places the implementation of local budgets into a permanent state of instability, unpredictability and disarray. Local leaders are not able to guide their communities with surety, respond to unique local priorities or engender community confidence if they must continuously offer a caveat every time they speak of budgetary matters. For example, the impact this ‘instability’ has on day-to-day and regular municipal business/activity can be challenging. Our districts initial referendum vote on our 5-year capital plan was negatively impacted by (a) the lack of FY budget by both the governor and the legislative body and (b) knowing that the governor was still contemplating making additional reductions. In addition, these latter changes create a greater potential exposure and are likely to impact the requests for the next fiscal year as the basic funding provided by the state was less and strong, financially stable communities are already having to dip into their reserves.

The threat of rescinding or reducing the Education Cost Sharing grant during the fiscal year is particularly onerous for the communities who have built a stable, fiscally prudent and positive financial standing. Voters look to leaders to be transparent, truthful, forward looking and confident, especially in matters of funding and this cannot be sustained unless the year to year budget funding remains stable.

We urge the Education Committee **to support H.B. No. 5171** and thank all the members for their attention.

Robert Congdon, 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman  
Sean Nugent, School Board Chair  
Roy Seitsinger, Superintendent